

Serial No. 09/978,516

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. A nail-driving tool comprising:
a cylinder comprising a chamber defined by an inner peripheral wall and an end wall, the end wall including a through-hole, the inner peripheral wall including plural ports communicated with outside;
a piston reciprocatingly received in the chamber of the cylinder;
a driving element securely attached to the piston to move therewith, the driving element extending through the through-hole of the end wall;
a bumper located between the piston and the end wall, the driving element extending through the bumper; and
an annular gap between the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder and a portion of the bumper not in contact with the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder and around the driving element, with the annular gap being in communication with the plural ports,
the annular gap allowing exit of the air in the chamber via the plural ports of the cylinder and allowing entrance of ambient air into the chamber of the cylinder via the plural ports of the cylinder.

(Please amend claim 2 as follows:)

2. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bumper includes an enlarged end section that abuts against the end wall, with the enlarged end section being of a larger cross sectional size than the portion of the bumper not in contact with the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder, with the nail-driving tool further comprising an annular connecting wall being defined between the end wall and the inner peripheral wall, the enlarged end section of the bumper being securely received in a space defined by the annular connecting wall.

(Please amend claim 3 as follows:)

3. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 2, wherein the annular connecting wall has a cross-sectional size larger than that of the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder, thereby defining the annular gap between the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder and the portion of the bumper not in contact with the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder.

Please amend claim 5 as follows:

5. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

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a5 a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, wherein the head comprises plural ports in an end thereof to allow communication between the chamber of the cylinder and outside.

Please cancel claim 6 as being incorporated into claim 1 (amended).

Please amend claim 7 as follows:

a6 7. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 3, with the bumper comprising a first bumper section and a second bumper section, wherein the first bumper section is more rigid than the second bumper section, the second bumper section including the enlarged end section that abuts against the end wall, the enlarged end section of the second bumper section having a cross sectional size larger than that of the annular gap.

Please cancel claim 8 without prejudice.

Please amend claim 9 as follows:

a7 9. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 3, further comprising means for driving the piston, said piston-driving means being one of pressurized air and inflammable gas.

(Please amend claim 10 as follows:)

10. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 3, further comprising:
a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, wherein the head comprises plural ports in an end thereof to allow communication between the chamber of the cylinder and outside.

(Please amend claim 11 as follows:)

11. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 7, wherein the annular gap is defined between the second bumper section and the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder.

Please cancel claim 12 without prejudice

Please amend claim 14 as follows:

a8 14. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 11, further comprising:
a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, wherein the head comprises plural ports in an end thereof to allow communication between the chamber of the cylinder and outside.

Please add the following claims 15 and 16:

a9 15. The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:
a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, with the bumper comprising a first bumper section and a second bumper section made of a material having a rigidity different from that of the first bumper section.